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Report on a Symposium on Conflict Mediation in Africa

GRANT TO THE CANADIAN ASSOCIATION OF AFRICAN STUDIES IN SUPPORT OF A SYMPOSIUM ON CONFLICT MEDIATION IN AFRICA

FINAL REPORT

SUBMITTED TO THE POLICY DIVISION OF THE DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND INTERNATIONAL TRADE

CAAS applied to the Department of Foreign Affairs, requesting support for particular sessions to be convened during the 1996 Annual Meeting of the Canadian Association of African Studies, namely a plenary session on the subject of preventive diplomacy, and other sessions concerned with the resolution of political conflict in Africa. As described in the award agreement, the project was to be focused on "discussion of experiences of the failures of conventional conflict resolution and diplomacy and the form anticipatory or preventive diplomacy and conflict mediation might take."

The theme of political crisis and mediation was in fact a very major preoccupation of the entire conference, held in Montréal, 1-5 May, 1996. The grant from DFAIT has been used to support two major sessions, a Plenary Forum on "Preventive Diplomacy: Resolving African Conflict Before the Fact", and a public Roundtable on "(Re)viewing Conflict: Genocide & Justice in Africa". In my view, these two sessions represented high points of the conference. Moreover, at least thirteen other sessions were concerned with the same complex of issues or on crises in particular regions or countries in Africa; we invite you to examine the conference program enclosed here for more details on these sessions. Major plenary sessions, and many other regular sessions, were presented in simultaneous translation.

In this report, we present the following:

- A description of the conference theme, "Crisis and Renaissance";
- List of all sessions relevant to conflict and mediation;
- The aims of the two major sessions supported by DFAIT;
- Brief summary of the proceedings of those two sessions;
- A description of the Canadian Association of African Studies.
- A copy of the conference program.

I. LIST OF SESSIONS RELEVANT TO POLITICAL CONFLICT AND MEDIATION

[Please consult conference program for more details]

28. 3.1 PLENARY FORUM ON PREVENTIVE DIPLOMACY: RESOLVING AFRICAN CONFLICT BEFORE THE FACT

40. 4.2 ROUNDTABLE ON (RE)VIEWING CONFLICT: GENOCIDE & JUSTICE IN AFRICA/ ATELIER SUR (RE)VOIR LE CONFLIT: GÉNOCIDE ET JUSTICE EN AFRIQUE

4. 3.4 ETHNICITY, CONFLICT, NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL RESOLUTION

5. 5.3 ATELIER SUR LES MÉDIAS ET LE RWANDA: NOUVEAUX DÉFIS

12. 3.5 ETHNICITY, CONFLICT AND THE STATE

23. 3.3 CONFLICT RESOLUTION, PEACE-MAKING AND JUSTICE

32. 3.10 THE NIGERIAN CRISIS

51. 3.11 SELF-DETERMINATION: SUDAN AND WESTERN SAHARA

55. 13.4 ANGOLA AND THE PEACE: CRISIS AND CHALLENGES AT THE END OF THE CENTURY

60. 3.9 DIMENSIONS OF THE CRISIS IN SOMALIA

63. 10.4 VIOLENCE POLITIQUE COMME DISCOURS ET COMME MODE D'ACTION POLITIQUE EN AFRIQUE CENTRALE CONTEMPORAINE

68. 3.12 DISINTEGRATION, WAR AND ELECTIONS: STATE COLLAPSE AND LIBERAL DEMOCRACY IN SIERRE LEONE

69. 3.8 ROUNDTABLE ON THE UNENDING WAR: CONFLICT AND AUTONOMY IN SOUTHERN SUDAN

76. 3.7 ETHNICITY AND CONFLICT IN RWANDA: HISTORICAL AND CONTEMPORARY PERSPECTIVES

80. 1.5 PLENARY SESSION 5. CANADIAN POLICY TOWARDS AFRICA: DIPLOMATIC PERSPECTIVES ON AID, TRADE AND RELIEF

II. STATEMENT OF THE CONFERENCE THEME

"Africa 1996 Afrique:
Crisis/Crise
&
Renaissance"

Following the optimism of Independence in the 1960s and growth in the 1970s, Africa's fortunes declined in the 1980s, leading to crisis in the 1990s. The current crisis in Africa is social, political, economic, environmental, demographic and medical in nature. We are concerned not only with understanding the genesis and nature of the crisis, but also the inventiveness and resilience revealed as the continent seeks models of resurgence and rebirth to meet the challenges of the present.

The 1996 meeting shall be concerned with political conflict, within and between countries, its mediation and resolution, the search for new forms of governance through democratization, the growing international influence of South Africa under majority government, the effectiveness of structural adjustment policies and their environmental and social effects, responses to the agrarian crisis and debates over changing forms of property and land tenure, different trends in migration and population across the continent, trends in the spread of HIV and social and economic responses to AIDS, and the humanizing role of African arts, music and literature as expressions of the human spirit and of resistance to crisis.

The program reflects the diversity as well as the interconnectedness of the many dimensions of the African crisis. We are holding a series of plenary sessions which involve academics, specialists in foreign affairs and international human rights and the activist and development communities. Samir Amin will present the keynote address on "The Causes of Africa's Economic Disaster". The International Development Research Centre is sponsoring a development forum to be held on "Democratization in Africa: Beyond Formal Politics!". With the collaboration of Canada's Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade we will convene a Plenary Symposium on "Preventive Diplomacy: Conflict Mediation Before the Fact", a new theme in international policy. And in conjunction with Vues d'Afrique, we are convening a Plenary Roundtable on "Africa and the Media". other plenary sessions will concern the mediation of regional conflict, the role of the media in development, and environmental and health implications of the agrarian crisis.

Reinforcing the melding of the humanistic and scientific within our Association, as well as in African life, we will join with the international African film festival, *Vues d'Afriques*, a world famous event held each year in Montreal, to present a program of cinematic presentations and debates between scholars and filmmakers. This program, especially aimed at the CAAS audience, will include two film series, on "Images of Subversion: Alternative Views on Culture and Politics in Africa" and "(Re)Viewing Conflict: Media(ting) Images of Africa". We are also collaborating on two evening debates which spring from the engagement between art and life: a debate involving African filmmakers and media specialists on the culturally and politically critical and innovative in media forms ("Images of Subversion"), and a roundtable on "(Re)Viewing Conflict: Genocide and Justice in Africa". The final plenary session, with representation from Foreign Affairs, IDRC, CIDA and the academic community, will involve a discussion of the evolution of Canadian foreign and development policy towards Africa, and future prospects in African-Canadian relations.

III. SESSIONS SUPPORTED IN PART BY THIS GRANT

III A. Description of the Sessions.

PLENARY 3. Preventing Conflict. A Symposium on "Preventive Diplomacy and Conflict Mediation in Africa", moderated by Edward Broadbent, President of the International Centre for Human Rights and Democratic Development, with the participation of Gerald Cossette and Edward Willer from the Canadian Department of Foreign Affairs, Ben Lobulu, President of the Human Rights Monitoring Group in Tanzania, Seri Dedy from Côte d'Ivoire.

DEBATE 2. Genocide and Justice. The aftermath of the Rwandan crisis and the problem of genocide and justice will be explored in a panel on "(Re)Viewing Conflict: Genocide and Justice in Africa", moderated by Professor Frank Chalk and Rose Ndayahoze, Vues d'Afrique, with the participation of Donald Woods, Payam Akhavan, Legal Advisor to the UN Tribunal on Genocide, Professor Howard Adelman, Michael J. Chesson from the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade and François Xavier Nsanzuwera, formerly with the Rwandan Ministry of Justice.

III B. Resumé of Sessions directly supported by DEFAIT:

It would be impossible to summarize the different views expressed by participants, and, in the context of conference presentations and exchanges, no attempt can be made to articulate a single conclusion.

Initiating the session on Preventive Diplomacy and Conflict Mediation in Africa, Edward Broadbent affirmed the importance of an active international presence in situations of potential crisis, and developed some of the work pursued by the International Centre for Human Rights in preventive diplomacy. The case for developing a formal policy of preventive diplomacy, and the record of Canadian support for international initiatives, especially regarding the OAU's creation of a program for conflict prevention, was presented by G. Cossette and E. Willer of Foreign Affairs. [The most pointed case against such a policy was presented by M. Jean-H. Guilmette, now of IDRC, in the session on Canadian Policy towards Africa.] From the African perspective, Ben Lobulu, a human rights lawyer from Tanzania, presented an articulate case for a more assertive and proactive policy towards conflict in Africa, Seri Dedy, from Côte d'Ivoire, discussing the experience of conflict and the human need to participate in processes of mediation, resolution and reconciliation.

The session on Genocide in Africa discussed the situation in Rwanda and Burundi in some depth, emphasizing the need to achieve justice as the basis for reconciliation. Donald Wood, a journalist turned government critic in South Africa, presented an optimistic visage regarding the possibilities of racial and ethnic reconciliation, based on the South African experience. Howard Adelman analyzed the failure of the international community to act to prevent the Rwandan genocide, despite the early knowledge it had regarding the ensuing conflict. Payam Akhavan addressed the question of the role the United Nations now plays through the UN Tribunal on Genocide, and developed how important it is to pursue a legally transparent process, based on evidence, if the process is to retain credibility. Michael Chesson presented the position of the Department of Foreign Affairs on the Rwanda and Burundi situations. And François Nsanzuwera presented problems in achieving rapid legal recourse in present-day Rwanda, and the possibilities for reconciliation following the genocide. The session concluded with comparative reflections on the experience of genocide, and an appeal to link prevention with justice, reconciliation with truth.

III C. List of Participants in the Two Sessions.

Friday, May 2nd, 10:15 - 12:55 - Redpath Hall
28. 3.1 PLENARY FORUM ON "Preventive Diplomacy: Resolving African Conflict Before the Fact"

Moderator: The Honourable Edward Broadbent, President, International Centre for Human Rights and Democratic Development

Gerald Cossette
Division of Peace and Development
Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade

Seri Dedy
Institut d'Éthno-Sociologie de l'Université
Côte d'Ivoire

R.N. Ben Lobulu, Chair
Human Rights Monitoring Group
Tanzania

Edward Willer, Deputy Director
Eastern and Southern African Division
Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade

Friday, May 2, 20:00 - 22:00
40. 4.2 ROUNDTABLE ON (RE)VIEWING CONFLICT: GENOCIDE & JUSTICE IN AFRICA/ ATELIER SUR (RE)VOIR LE CONFLIT: GÉNOCIDE ET JUSTICE EN AFRIQUE

Moderators: Frank Chalk, Department of History, Concordia University, and Rose Ndayahoze, Vues d'Afrique, fondateur de la fondation Martin Ndayahoze

Donald Woods, Journalist (U.K.), formerly Editor of the Daily Dispatch, East London, South Africa
Author of *Asking for Trouble*, and *Biko*

Payam Akhavan, Legal Advisor, UN Tribunal on Genocide (ICTY/ICTR)
The Hague, The Netherlands

Howard Adelman, Dept. of History
SUNY, Binghamton

Michael J. Chesson, West and Central Africa & Maghareb Division
Foreign Affairs and International Trade, Government of Canada
Rwanda and Burundi Desk

François Xavier Nsanzuwera, Département de Droit
Universitaire Instelling Antwerpen
ancien prosecuteur, Ministère de Justice, Rwanda

IV. CAAS is ...

An **ORGANIZATION** of Africanists brought together by common goals. The Association officially came into being in 1970 when the Canadian Committee on African Studies became the new Canadian Association of African Studies. Since then CAAS has expanded geographically and now has members in all parts of the world.

A **JOURNAL** which has been since the mid 1960s the voice of Canadian and international Africanists involved in scientific research. Under the present editorship of Professor Barry Riddell (Queen's University) and Penou-Achille Somé (The University of Lethbridge) the Journal has continued its drive towards a better understanding of the changing African reality. (Three issues per year).

A **NEWSLETTER** co-edited by José C. Curto (McGill University) and Danielle Laliberté (Université de Montréal). Since the 1970s this Newsletter has disseminated Africana information not only amongst members of CAAS, but also other Africanist associations, organizations, and scholars, especially those in Africa. (Two issues per year).

An **ANNUAL CONFERENCE** held on a different Canadian university campus. Each year the conferences bring together specialists on Africa including prominent officials from IDRC, CIDA, and NGOs as well as non-academics whose work involves them with Africa.

An IDRC grant, jointly awarded to the Canadian African Studies Association, the Canadian Asian Studies Association and the Canadian Association for Latin-American and Caribbean Studies, has permitted the establishment of a joint secretariat. The coordinating council, the **Canadian Council of Area Studies Learned Societies (CCASLS)**, composed of representatives from each of the three constituent area studies associations, undertakes the administration of funds and the coordination of joint activities of the associations.

L'ACÉA, c'est . . .

Une ORGANISATION d'africanistes rassemblés autour d'objectifs communs. L'Association a été fondée en 1970 lorsque le Comité canadien des études africaines est devenu la nouvelle Association canadienne des études africaines. Depuis, l'ACÉA a connu une forte expansion géographique et a maintenant des membres à travers le monde.

Une **REVUE** qui, depuis le milieu des années '60, est devenue la voix des milieux africanistes canadiens et internationaux impliqués dans la recherche scientifique. Sous la responsabilité actuelle du Professeur Barry Riddell (Queen's University) et Penou-Achille Somé (The University of Lethbridge), la REvue poursuit son objectif d'accroître la compréhension d'une réalité africaine changeante

Un **BULLETIN** co-édité par José C. Curto (Université McGill) et Danielle Laliberté (Université de Montréal). Depuis les années '70, ce Bulletin a diffusé des informations africanistes non seulement parmi les membres de l'ACÉA, mais aussi parmi d'autres associations africanistes, organisations et chercherus, tout particulièrement ceux et celles en Afrique. (Deux numéros par année)

Une **CONFÉRENCE ANNUELLE** tenue sur un campus universitaire différent. Les conférences réunissent chaque année des spécialistes de l'Afrique, tant universitaires que non-universitaires, des milieux de la recherche et de l'intervention, en enfin de plus en plus de représentants d'organismes de coopération comme le CRDI et l'ACDI, de même que des responsables d'ONGs.

Le CRDI a accordé une subvention conjointe aux trois principales associations canadiennes d'Études régionales, soient l'Association canadienne des études africaines, l'Association canadienne des études asiatiques et l'Association canadienne des études latino-américaines et caraïbes, pour former un secrétariat commun. Le nouvel organisme chargé de la gestion de la subvention commune et de la coordination des activités entreprise conjointement est le **Conseil canadien des sociétés savanates d'études régionales (CCSSÉR)** dont le comité de direction est formé de deux représentants de chacune des trois associations.